

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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S/PRS:JTRATTNER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CI, SOPN

SUBJECT: NOON PRESS BRIEFING MAY 26

THE FOLLOWING EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE AT DEPARTMENT'S NOON
PRESS BRIEFING, MAY 26.

BEGIN QUOTE :

Q:HODDING, WHAT IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S VIEW ON THE
ADVISABILITY OF THE ADMINISTRATION RECEIVING OPPOSITION
POLITICIANS -- EXILED OPPOSITION POLITICIANS LIKE FORMER
PRESIDENT FREI OF CHILE? A STORY IN THE MORNING PAPER
SAYS THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WAS QUITE OPPOSED TO HIS
RECEPTION BY MR. MONDALE.

A :WELL, LET ME NEVER BE ACCUSED OF SUGGESTING TO YOU, MY
FORMER COLLEAGUES, THE BEST WAY TO FIND OUT AN ANSWER LIKE
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THAT, BUT THE REPORTER MIGHT HAVE CALLED UP AND ASKED
THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

THE FACT IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDED THAT THE
FORMER PRESIDENT BE RECEIVED.

Q:WAS THERE SOME OPPOSITION INSIDE THE DEPARTMENT?

A:I WOULD REPEAT WHAT I SAID TO YOU BEFORE, THAT YOU CAN FIND DIFFERING VIEWPOINTS ON A NUMBER OF SUBJECTS BY WALKING DOWN ANY HALL HERE. I'M TELLING YOU THAT THE ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE, MR. WARREN CHRISTOPHER, SENT A RECOMMENDATION OVER TO THE WHITE HOUSE THAT THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF CHILE IN FACT HAVE THIS MEETING. AND I WILL ALSO ADD, TO MY KNOWLEDGE NO ATTEMPT WAS MADE BY THE REPORTER TO ASK WHETHER OR NOT THAT WAS TRUE.

Q :APART FROM THAT, HODDING, YOU HAVE ALWAYS SAID IN THE PAST THAT YOU CAN FIND INSIDE OF 20,000 PEOPLE ONE OR SO WHO WILL SAY ALMOST ANYTHING. WHAT WE'RE ASKING -- WHAT MURREY, I THINK, WAS ASKING -- WAS THERE A SUB-STANTIVE OPPOSITION FORMED? WAS THERE AN ORGANIZED KIND OF THING --

A :I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN BY BEING ORGANIZED, BUT BEING HONEST, OF COURSE, THERE WERE DIFFERING OPINIONS ON THIS.

Q:WHAT WAS THE RECOMMENDATION BASED ON?

A:HIS BEST JUDGMENT.

Q :YES, BUT BEYOND THAT, I MEAN, DO THEY CONSIDER FREI A GREAT DEMOCRATIC LEADER IN THE HEMISPHER?

A:WE ARE INTERESTED IN UNDERSTANDING VIEWPOINTS ACROSS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM IN LATIN AMERICA -- AND I DON'T WANT TO CONFINE IT TO JUST LATIN AMERICA. WE TRY TO TALK TO A NUMBER OF PEOPLE REPRESENTING DIFFERENT POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES ACROSS THE GLOBE -- AROUND THE GLOBE.

Q:IS THAT WHY MR. CHRISTOPHER IS RECEIVING ALSO ALMEYDA, THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER?

A:THAT'S EXACTLY WHY HE IS RECEIVING HIM TOMORROW AFTERNOON AT 3:30 P.M.

Q :ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL SOMETHING TO THE CHILEAN JUNTA?

A:WE'RE NOT TRYING TO TELL ANYTHING TO ANYBODY. WE ARE TRYING TO LEARN.

Q:I MEAN, IMPLICIT THERE IS SOME KIND OF MESSAGE BECAUSE FREI AND ALMEYDA AREN'T JUST ANY CHILEANS.

A :NO, THEY ARE NOT. THEY ARE MAJOR FIGURES IN CHILE,
AND THEY ARE PEOPLE, AS IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES, WHO
REPRESENT VIEWPOINTS THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR.

Q :CAN YOU CONFIRM THAT ALMEYDA MET WITH BRADY TYSON IN
NEW YORK?

A :I'M SORRY, I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT. DO YOU WANT
ME TO TRY TO CONFIRM IT? FRANKLY, THE EASIEST THING
TO DO AGAIN IS CALL UP AND SAY, HEY, BRADY, WHAT ABOUT
IT?

Q :IT'S A LONG-DISTANCE CALL.

A:I'LL LET YOU DIAL 8 OUT OF HERE.

Q:IT'S A DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE,
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ISN'T IT, TO RECEIVE --

Q :NOW WAIT A MINUTE, DEPARTURE FROM WHAT KIND OF NORMAL
DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE?

Q :WELL, IN THE CASE OF FREI AND ALMEYDA.

A:WHAT NORMAL DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE?

Q :LET ME PUT IT ANOTHER WAY. CAN YOU RECALL ANY
INSTANCE WHERE A PRESIDENT HAS EVER RECEIVED -- OR WHERE
A VICE PRESIDENT OR ANYBODY AT THE LEVEL OF VICE
PRESIDENT, OR EVEN A SECRETARY OF STATE -- HAS EVER
RECEIVED A FORMER HEAD OF STATE WHO IS IN STRONG
OPPOSITION TO THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, WITH WHICH WE
HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS? I CAN'T FIND ANYBODY
IN WASHINGTON WHO REMEBERS ANY PRECEDENT FOR THAT. I
MAY BE WRONG. I WOULD BE HAPPY TO BE CORRECTED.

A :ALL RIGHT, IF I CAN CORRECT YOU, I WILL. I'LL
CHECK IT.

Q :HODDING --

A:WAIT A SECOND. I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU GOT THAT,
I SAID I WOULD CHECK WHETHER WE HAVE IN FACT.

END QUOTE. VANCE

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